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Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 08072 110901Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
HA-05 IO-13 /084 W
----------077199 110903Z /20
P 110827Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3419

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8072

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM PINS KS
SUBJ: REV. PAK HYONG-KYU DETAINED FOR QUESTIONING

REF: SEOUL 7535 AND PREVIOUS

1. REV. PAK HYONG-KYU, A MINISTER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA WHO IS ACTIVE IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND WORK WITH THE POOR, WAS DETAINED SEPTEMBER 4. DISSIDENTS ARE CONCERNED THAT HE MAY BE CHARGED.

2. REV. PAK WAS THE FEATURED SPEAKER AT A RALLY AT THE KNCC ON SEPTEMBER 4 WHICH WAS CALLED TO KEEP THE CHONJU INCIDENT (SEE REFTELS) BEFORE THE EYES OF THE CHURCH. THE RALLY ALSO SERVED AS A WARM UP FOR A GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (ROK) TO BE HELD IN CHONJU ON SEPTEMBER 12 TO EXPRESS THAT DENOMINATION'S OUTRAGE OVER THE ROKG'S HANDLING OF THE INCIDENT. REV. PAK WHIPPED HIS AUDIENCE (MOSTLY STUDENTS) INTO SUCH A STATE OF EXCITEMENT THAT THEY TRIED TO MARCH FROM THE KNCC HALL, BUT WERE BLOCKED BY THE RIOT POLICE. ACCORDING TO SOME OBSERVERS WHO WERE PRESENT, REV. PAK CALLED NORMAL STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS "MEANINGLESS" AND EXHORTED STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE DOWNTOWN IN THE FUTURE. REPORTEDLY, HE ALSO CALLED UPON CHRISTIAN YOUTH TO GO IN FORCE TO CHONJU TO "LIBERATE" OR "FREE" OR "TAKE"
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(REPORTED IN VARIOUS FORMS) THE TOWN AND PROCEED FROM THERE TO OTHER CITIES SUCH AS TAEGU, KWANGJU, AND SO FORTH. THESE REPORTED REMARKS HAVE MADE DISSIDENTS FEEL THAT THERE IS A REAL POSSIBILITY THAT THE ROKG MAY CONSIDER REV. PAK GUILTY OF INCITING THE STUDENTS TO DISORDERS OR TO CONSPIRACY TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT. ON SEPTEMBER 8, POLICE REPORTEDLY SEARCHED REV. PAK'S HOUSE AND REMOVED A

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QUANTITY OF BOOKS AND OTHER PRINTED MATERIALS, AN EVENT WHICH DISSIDENTS FEEL MAY ALSO BE A SIGN THAT THE ROKG IS PREPARING A CASE AGAINST REV. PAK.

3. THE SITUATION IS NOT WITHOUT ITS IRONY. DURING THE STORMY MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 4, REV. PAK REPORTEDLY RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM THE MINISTERS IN CHONJU TELLING HIM THAT THE ROKG HAD MADE FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN HANDLING THE CHONJU DEMONSTRATORS AND THAT THE CHURCHMEN THERE CONSIDERED THE MATTER CLOSED. THERE IS TO BE NO GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN CHONJU ON SEPTEMBER 12. REV. PAK TRIED TO CALM THE AUDIENCE AFTER RECEIVING THIS INFORMATION, HIS FRIENDS HOPE THE POLICE WILL TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT IN DETERMINING WHETHER TO PROSECUTE HIM OR NOT. IN ANY EVENT, THERE WILL BE A PRAYER MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 12 AT REV. PAK'S OWN CHURCH, THE CHEIL CHURCH IN SEOUL, TO PRESS AUTHORITIES FOR HIS RELEASE. GLEYSTEEN

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